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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

CAMPS AND CONFERENCES GIVE EIU LIFE IN THE SUMMER

CHARLESTON -- Every fall over 10,500 students descend on Eastern Illinois University and for nine months Eastern and the surrounding communities come alive with renewed activity.

But what happens to Eastern in the spring after the last graduate has crossed the stage at commencement and the school year has officially come to a close?

Many people driving by EIU's administration building "Old Main" may think the campus is peaceful, quiet and empty during the summer months, but in reality EIU is alive and bustling with activity.

Each summer Eastern plays host to thousands of high school students, teachers and other professionals who take advantage of the many camps, conferences and workshops that are held on campus.

This summer, between the end of May and the middle of August, approximately 17,500 people will attend over 75 camps and conferences held at Eastern.

"For the people at the front of the campus, it may be business as usual, but for us at the back of the campus, it's almost like

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SUMMER CAMPS

Disneyland without the characters," said Mary Smith, assistant director of housing. "We welcome so many guests and have so many varied activities going on all summer long that the excitement never stops. There is always something interesting going on."

Smith and her staff of 10 professionals and 24 students work year-round on the summer camps and conference schedule. They serve as a "one-stop shop" for those in need of camp or conference facilities.

"If groups are looking for camp or conference sites, all they need to do is call us. We can provide them with lodging, meals, meeting room facilities, etc. If they need help developing a conference, we will work with them. We'll contact the Office of Continuing Education or whoever they may need to work with to get it going. We try to offer a total package," said Smith.

Camp and conference costs vary according to specific needs, length of stay, number of meals, etc. Groups staying for longer periods will be issued I.D. cards that will provide them with library privileges and access to the Student Recreation Center among other services.

"We don't advertise much," said Smith. "Most of our conference business comes from word of mouth. We have a number of groups that have been coming here for years. Our return rate is between 97 and 98 percent. Eastern must be doing something right to keep them coming back."

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SUMMER CAMPS

According to Smith, the camps and conferences fulfill three important objectives for the university by serving as a valuable recruitment tool, providing summer employment for a number of campus employees and generating almost \$1 million in revenue.

This summer Eastern will host nine cheerleader/pom pon/dance camps, 17 athletic camps, approximately 25 music and marching band camps and 30 other groups, including the Civil Air Patrol, Community College Teachers Workshop, Mid-Continent Men's Basketball Officials and the State Farm Insurance Company.

Several academic camps also will be held on campus, including the Illinois Mathematics Science Academy (IMSA) for gifted high school freshmen and sophomores; Partnerships for Excellence (PFE), a summer program that brings freshman and senior minority students from 11 high schools to campus; and EIU's annual SummerFest, a resident repertory company that provides theater opportunities and upper division or graduate credit hours for students. SummerFest will present three musicals and one children's play this summer.

Boys' State and Girls' State representatives will congregate at Eastern June 10-16 and June 17-24, respectively.

For more information about scheduling a camp or conference at Eastern, contact Camps and Conference Housing, Student Services Building, Eastern Illinois University, Charleston, Il 61920, (217) 581-2515.